



AIHPC

All Ireland Institute of
Hospice and Palliative Care

Mentoring Guide: For health and social care professionals who provide palliative care in a variety of care settings

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Introduction

All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care (AIHPC) was formally established in October 2010, following a successful bid by the Consortium members to secure funding for the organisation. AIHPC reflects a broad range of expertise in the service delivery, academic preparation for and management of hospice and palliative care across the island of Ireland. Consortium members and their organisations are experts in palliative care service planning and delivery, education and training, research and policy analysis. Through its collaborative approach AIHPC promotes strategic, evidence-based contributions to the policy/practice environment, North and South and through a collaborative and comprehensive approach deliver a better experience for patients and their families.

AIHPC recognises that in order to deliver a better experience for patients and families, health and social care staff need to be highly skilled and motivated individuals. As such AIHPC was interested in providing guidance to support the continued development of all health and social professionals who provide palliative care across a range of care settings.

Why is mentoring valuable?

Mentoring sits within the context of human and personnel development, indeed it provides the environment in which both professional and personal development can occur. Mentoring along with well-planned clinical supervision is also a means to develop leadership capacity.

Mentoring involves the development of a supportive relationship so that teaching and learning can occur (Thorndyke et al., 2008). Mentoring relationships are based around mutual respect and ensuring that each partner is accountable to the other (Mills et al., 2005). The mentoring process can benefit mentors, mentees and the organisations where both are employed (Hansford et al., 2003; Taheiran & Shekarchian, 2008). Mentoring focuses on achievement and acquisition of knowledge and has the potential to foster clinical expertise, scholarship and research and (Berk et al., 2005; Mills et al., 2005).

Mentoring relationships are based around reciprocity and accountability between the mentor and the mentee, while the mentoring process itself has the potential to benefit mentors, mentees and organisations by developing a more rounded and resilient workforce, that fosters scholarship and research, as well as clinical expertise (Mills, Francis and Bonner, 2005; Hansford, Ehrich and Tennent, 2003; Taheiran and Shekarchian, 2008).

The mentoring guide



This mentoring guide was developed as a resource for clinicians working in palliative care. Palliative Care by its very nature cross cuts much of the health service as such the developmental relationship that can be established and maintained through mentoring has the potential to be particularly helpful to Palliative Care clinicians to influence and be affective across care settings.

This mentoring guide is divided into three sections:

- Section 1 provides an overview of mentoring
- Section 2 outlines the mentor and mentee relationship
- Section 3 provides guidance on some resources contained in this mentoring guide.

Section 1: Overview of mentoring

Definitions

There are a number of definitions of mentoring. Some of the more commonly are detailed below:

Mentor

Boyd (1998) defines a mentor as 'A kind of guide who, despite having been far enough ahead to know something of what's down the path, comes back to walk with you, and thus leads without leaving you to follow.'

More recently Zerzan *et al.*, (2009:140) describe a mentor as 'someone of advanced rank or experience who guides, teaches and develops a novice.'

Irrespective of any definition of the mentor, all appear to emphasise the supportive professional relationship that exists between two individuals and which is focussed on the development of the mentee.

Carey and Weissman (2010) suggest that the ideal mentor is someone who is dedicated to the mentoring process and demonstrates a genuine desire to establish, build and cultivate a reciprocal mentoring relationship.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a process where an experienced individual (the mentor) guides another individual (the mentee) in the development, examination or re-examination of their personal or professional development needs (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). In practice mentoring can be a dynamic and reciprocal relationship aimed at fostering the development of another both professionally and personally (Healy & Welchert, 1990). Clutterbuck (2004) suggests that a mentoring relationship enable one person to assist another to make a significant transition in knowledge, work or thinking. In the context of palliative care, mentoring is about nurturing and empowering colleagues who are new to palliative care in order enhance knowledge and understanding through shared learning, and professional and personal development.

Why is Mentoring Used?

A mentor is understood as an individual with the knowledge, attitude, skills, experience, vision, energy and commitment needed to facilitate the professional and personal development of another (Murray, 2002).

Mentors are often described as the ones who have the potential to increase confidence in others through positive encouragement and shared knowledge by promoting life-long learning and aid (Murray, 2002; Gray & Smith, 2000). Mentoring has been described as a way of providing clinical, emotional and psychological assistance (Fitzpatrick, 2001).

Mentoring in Palliative Care

Mentoring is particularly valuable in palliative care where the nature of the work undertaken by clinicians can be both clinically challenging and emotionally draining.

This mentoring guide aims to provide guidance for health and social care professionals who provide palliative care at various levels in their daily work. For the purposes of this guide three level of palliative care provision are defined (Radbruch & Payne, 2009):

Level 1: Palliative care approach

The palliative care approach is a way to integrate palliative care methods and procedures in settings not specialised in palliative care. This includes not only pharmacological and non-pharmacological measures for symptom control, but also communication with patient and family as well as with other healthcare professionals, decision-making and goal setting in accordance with the principles of palliative care.

Level 2: General palliative care

General palliative care is provided by primary care professionals and specialists treating patients with life-threatening diseases who have good basic palliative care skills and knowledge. Professionals who are involved more frequently in palliative care, such as oncologists or geriatric specialists, but do not provide palliative care as the main focus of their work, still may have acquired special education and training in palliative care and may provide additional expertise. These professionals can provide general palliative care.

Level 3: Specialist palliative care

Specialist palliative care is provided by specialised services for patients with complex problems not adequately covered by other treatment options. Specialist palliative care services require a team approach, combining a multi-professional team with an interdisciplinary mode of work. Team members must be highly qualified and should have their main focus of work in palliative care.

In the context of a mentoring relationship in palliative care, it can be helpful if the mentor and mentee come from the same professional background. However, the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes can also be supported when a mentoring relationship is established between individuals from different disciplinary backgrounds. The important point of the mentoring relationship is that the mentor should have experience in palliative care as this experience and the mentor's willingness to share, will facilitate learning through the exploration and discussion of professional and personal experiences to date.

Tobin (2004) identified seven roles a mentor might play and these are normally focused on helping orientate the mentor to the process of the mentoring relationship, pointing out resources, demonstrating best practice, facilitating learning and providing feedback (Table 1).



Table 1: Mentoring roles (adapted from Tobin, 2004)

Role	Attributes	Contextualised to Palliative Care
Teacher	As a teacher a mentor can provide information regarding institutional norms, as well as guidance about teaching, research and leadership.	A mentor in palliative care as well as providing information about institutional norms can also provide guidance about the norms within the specialty of palliative care, identifying and pointing out advances in clinical practice.
Sponsors	As a sponsor, a mentor can act as an advocate for the mentee, enhancing their visibility and credibility by expanding both their local and national network.	A mentor in palliative care can in the context of being a sponsor, facilitate the transition for the mentee into specialist palliative care.
Advisors	As an advisor, the mentor is a guide and counsellor, who can offer advice on career direction and trajectory. The mentor can also act as a facilitator for the development of skills and self-reliance.	A mentor in palliative care who acts as an advisor can provide insight into career and development opportunities that may be available to the mentee.
Agents	As an agent, the mentor can help to protect the mentee.	A mentor in palliative care acting as an agent can facilitate the mentee to develop the resilience required to work in such a challenging environment.
Role models	As a role model the mentor demonstrates behaviour that the mentee may want to emulate.	A mentor in palliative care who acts as a role model can enhance the learning and development experience of the mentee who is at the early stage of their palliative care career.
Academic coaches	As an academic coach, the mentor can provide training, advice and motivation.	A mentor in palliative care who is acting as an academic coach can facilitate the mentee to engage with ongoing training.
Confidantes	As a confidante the mentor is an empathic listener and can provide both emotional and psychological support.	A mentor in palliative care who acts as a confidante providing emotional and psychological support can support the development of the skills needed to work in a challenging environment.

Section 2: The mentor and mentee relationship

The Mentor–Mentee Partnership

The characteristics of effective mentor-mentee partnerships are reflective of the type of relationship that has been established. The mentoring relation should be one on reciprocity and is likely to succeed if both the mentor and mentee are working towards the same goals. The mentor-mentee relationships can also be enhanced when there is mutual respect and both consider each other as equals irrespective of skill and level of experience.

In palliative care communication is a key dimension in the therapeutic relationship. In the context of the mentoring relationship good interpersonal communication and problem solving skills are likely to enhance the overall outcomes of the mentoring process.

In order to work successfully toward the achievement of shared goals both the mentor and mentee display commitment and motivation. It is important that the mentor is willing to share information, skills and wisdom and the mentee has the capacity for self-direction and is able to use their initiative.

Interpersonal strategies for mentor/mentee relationships

In the initial stages of the mentoring relationship the mentor and mentee should spend time getting to know each. This helps to establish rapport and ensures that both the mentor and mentee have an opportunity to clarify the purpose and hoped for outcomes of the mentorship relationship. This initial period is also a useful time in which to establish trust and develop an open environment to promote discussion. It is important that the mentor be available, receptive, non-threatening, honest and understanding in all interactions with the mentee.

As the mentoring relationship is reciprocal it is important that the mentor and mentee listen to each other's experiences, as these can provide opportunities for learning. It is helpful when the mentor asks probing, open-ended and 'what if' questions, as these can help to focus the work of the mentoring relationship and is likely to improve overall outcomes for both the mentee and the mentor. At all times the mentee should be encouraged to ask questions. The mentor should aim to answer any questions with clarity and in a supportive and encouraging way.

If the mentor needs to provide instructions, in respect of between meeting preparation, it is important that any instruction be given in way that ensures that the mentee understands what is expected. Finally both the mentor and mentee should be able to clarify any uncertainties and discuss any problems.

Setting the relationship parameters

In order for the mentoring relation to be successful it is important to establish the goals and outcomes of the mentoring relationship. Taking time to consider the desired outcome of the mentoring relationship is a good way to begin and the completion of the Mentoring Agreement can help to answer the question – What do each of you want from this mentoring relationship? (Appendix I)

As a reciprocal relationship built on trust, both the mentor and mentee need to ensure that confidentiality is respected. Once again the Mentoring Agreement (Appendix I) can help to address such questions as – What is agreed to in terms of protecting confidential information? What agreed to in terms of deciding when each one might need to seek the assistance of others?

An essential element of the mentoring relationship is an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each of the participants in the mentoring relationship. The Mentoring Agreement (Appendix I) helps to answer the question, what the mentor and the mentee agree to do over the course of the mentoring relationship?

As the mentoring relationship is reciprocal it is essential that both the mentor and mentee identify how each will be accountable to the other and how you will address any problems that may arise in the mentoring relationship. The Mentoring Agreement (Appendix I) will help to address the questions of how will you work together to hold each other accountable for making time to do what you plan and what are your problem-solving strategies?

Agreeing boundaries for meetings is important. When and how do you agree to communicate with one another, what are the topics that are relevant, and what is off-limits, in terms of your mentoring relationship are questions that should be discussed on the outset of the mentoring relationship (Appendix I).

Keeping a record of meetings is a good way to ensure that plans, progress and decisions can be documented. An Individual Development Plan (Appendix V) can be completed at the end of each meeting and can be used to address questions regarding career development and can also assist with the identification of specific interventions (e.g. education) that are needed to support professional and personal development.

In order to ensure that the mentoring relationship has a successful outcome it is important that both the mentee and mentor recognise their individual responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the mentee

- Be familiar with the content of the Mentoring Guide
- Be prepared for all meetings ensuring using the resources available (Appendix II), paying particular attention to identifying your individual needs
- Actively participate in the mentoring relationship and consider how knowledge and skills learning can be utilised to support your professional and personal development and be of added value to your current working environment
- Be mindful of the current work demands of your mentor
- Prepare an agenda for each meeting
- Complete your individual development plan
- Complete the annual evaluation of the mentoring relationship.

Responsibilities of the mentor

- Be familiar with the contents of the Mentoring Guide
- Be prepared for all meetings ensuring using the resources available (Appendix III)
- Actively participate in the mentoring relationship and consider how best to share knowledge and skills learning to support the professional and personal development of the mentee
- Be mindful of the current work demands of your mentee
- Agree the agenda in advance of each meeting
- Assist the mentee with completion of your individual development plan
- Complete the annual evaluation of the mentoring relationship

Section 3: Resources for use during the mentorship relationship

To support mentee's mentors will need to be familiar with the content of the Mentoring Guide. A number of resources are available to assist with preparing for and managing meetings, setting goals and development targets and evaluation the mentoring relationship:

Mentoring Agreement (Appendix I)

The mentoring agreement should be completed and agreed by the mentor and mentee at the beginning of the mentoring relationship. Two examples of a mentoring agreement are provided in Appendix I. These can be adapted to meet the specific needs of individual mentoring relationships.

Meeting Planning (Appendix II & III)

Planning for any meeting is important and this is no different when it comes to meetings between mentor and mentee. It is important for each part in the mentoring relation to take time to prepare. The checklist provided (Appendix II – Mentee; Appendix III – Mentor) should be used as an aide to assist with tasks or activities that need completion in advance of a mentor/mentee meeting.

Mentoring Worksheet (Appendix IV)

This Mentoring Worksheet is used in combination with the agenda for the mentor/mentee meeting. It is used record the mentee's progress and provide a roadmap for discussion at mentor/mentee meetings. It is also a helpful aide to use to focus discussions regarding your professional development needs with your line manager.

Individual Development Plan (Appendix V)

This Individual Development Plan is used in combination with the Meeting Agenda. It can be used to keep a record of your progress. It is an important tool to use to focus on address questions regarding career development as it can assist with the identification of specific interventions (e.g. education) that might be needed to support professional and personal development. It can also provide a roadmap for discussion of your professional development needs with your line manager.

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APPENDIX I

Sample Mentoring Agreement 1

We are voluntarily entering into a mentoring relationship that we expect will benefit both parties. This agreement sets the parameters of the relationship, including the expectation that we will continually evaluate the relationship to ensure it meets both our needs. Other elements of the relationship are:

Confidentiality:

Frequency of meetings/ anticipated duration of the relationship:

Approximate time investment of Mentor:

Specific role of Mentor:

Expectations of Mentee:

Additional Points:

- We agree that this mentoring relationship provides a developmental opportunity

Mentee: _____

Date: _____

Mentor: _____

Date: _____

Sample Mentoring Agreement 2

We are voluntarily entering into a mentoring relationship from which we both expect to benefit. We want this to be a rich, rewarding experience with most of our time together spent in professional development activities. To this end, we have mutually agreed upon the terms and conditions of our mentoring relationship as outlined in this agreement.

Objectives

We hope to achieve:

To accomplish this we will:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Confidentiality

All discussions will be held in confidence.

Frequency of Meetings

We will attempt to meet at least _____ time(s) per month. If we cannot attend a scheduled meeting, we agree to notify one another in advance.

Duration

We have determined that our mentoring relationship will continue as long as we both feel comfortable or until:

No-Fault Termination

We are committed to open and honest communication in our relationship. We will discuss and attempt to resolve any conflicts as they arise. If, however, one of us needs to terminate the relationship for any reason, we agree to abide by one another's decision.

Mentor

Mentee

Date

Date

APPENDIX II

PLANNING FOR MENTORING

MENTEE'S CHECKLIST

Mentee/Mentor: _____

Date: _____

The following are tasks or activities to complete in advance of meeting your mentor.
Read through the Checklist, add items (if appropriate), and mark as each task is completed.

	TASK	COMPLETED (✓)
1.	Read through The Mentorship Guide (http://test.aiihpc.org/education/mentoring/)	
2.	Find out as much information as you can about your mentor (if applicable).	
3.	If applicable reflect on any past experience of mentoring for insights which could be useful in this new mentoring partnership. Be prepared to talk about your own mentoring experiences, if any.	
4.	Write or develop your personal statement or vision about your career as it relates to this mentoring relationship. Think about your potential development goals and activities, and be ready to share all these with your mentor.	
5.	Read over the sample Mentoring Agreement . This needs to be discussed and completed with your mentor.	
6.	Think through what you would like to achieve through this mentoring relationship to do. Draft some <i>Goals for your Mentoring Relationship</i> to discuss with your mentor.	
7.	Prepare all relevant information about yourself (e.g., CV or job history, current job description) to share with your mentor.	
8.	Determine any limits you may have (e.g., Do you currently work irregular shift patterns? Do you attention care responsibilities that may affect your availability to meet with your mentor?)	
	Other Tasks: <i>(List and check off.)</i>	

APPENDIX III

PLANNING FOR MENTORING MENTOR'S CHECKLIST

Mentee/Mentor: _____

Date: _____

The following are tasks or activities to complete in advance of meeting your mentor.
Read through the Checklist, add items (if appropriate), and mark as each task is completed.

	TASK	COMPLETED (✓)
1.	Read through The Mentorship Guide (http://test.aiihpc.org/education/mentoring/)	
2.	Find out as much information as you can about your mentee.	
3.	Reflect on any past experience of mentoring for insights which could be useful in this new mentoring relationship. Be prepared to talk about your own mentoring experiences as a mentor or mentee.	
4.	Write or develop your personal statement or vision about your career as it relates to mentoring. Be ready to talk with your mentee about the potential development goals and activities of the mentoring relationship.	
5.	Read over the sample Mentoring Agreement . Remember that your role is not to 'tell what to do,' but to 'ask questions, sow seeds and steer the mentee clear of any potential problems.'	
6.	Think through what you would like to achieve through this mentoring relationship. Be ready to review and discuss the <i>Draft Goals for your Mentoring Relationship</i> with your mentee.	
7.	Prepare all relevant information about yourself (e.g., CV or job history, current job description) to share with your mentee and ask to see hers/his.	
8.	Determine any limits you may have (e.g., Do you currently work irregular shift patterns? Do you attention care responsibilities that may affect your availability to meet with your mentee?)	
	Other Tasks: (<i>List and check off.</i>)	

APPENDIX IV

MENTORING WORKSHEET

Mentee/Mentor: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

DIRECTIONS: This form can be used in combination with the Meeting Agenda. It can be used to keep a record of your progress. If used it is printed before each meeting, and information is updated following each meeting. The worksheet records progress and provides a roadmap for discussion at meeting with your mentor and can be used to assist discussions regarding your professional development needs with your line manager.

Professional/Career Goal			
Goal:	Short term: <input type="checkbox"/> Goal met <input type="checkbox"/> Making Progress <input type="checkbox"/> No Progress	Obstacles:	New goal (or strategy to overcome obstacles):
Goal:	Short term: <input type="checkbox"/> Goal met <input type="checkbox"/> Making Progress <input type="checkbox"/> No Progress	Obstacles:	New goal (or strategy to overcome obstacles):
Goal:	Short term: <input type="checkbox"/> Goal met <input type="checkbox"/> Making Progress <input type="checkbox"/> No Progress	Obstacles:	New goal (or strategy to overcome obstacles):

APPENDIX V

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mentee/Mentor: _____

Date: _____

DIRECTIONS: This form can be used in combination with the Meeting Agenda. It can be used to keep a record of your progress. If used, it is printed before each meeting, and information is updated following each meeting. The individual development plan can be used to address questions regarding career development and can assist with the identification of specific interventions (e.g. education) that might be needed to support professional and personal development. It can also provide a roadmap for discussion of your professional development needs with your line manager.

1. Identify your current role	
2. Identify your mentor	
3. 3(a) Identify your personal and professional goals (short, medium and long term) 3(b) Try to answer the question – What do you hope to achieve in your career?	
4. What areas of your career do you feel need to focus on and address in order to achieve your personal and professional goals	
5. Do you have specific education/training needs that need to be met in order for you to be able to achieve your professional goals?	
6. Identify the resources that you will need to achieve your goals	
7. Identify the factors that facilitate you to achieve your goals	
8. Identify the potential barriers to you achieving your goals?	